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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 21 December 2016

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/71/463/Add.3)*]

71/227. Effective global response to address the impacts of the El Niño phenomenon

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 69/218 of 19 December 2014 and 70/110 of 23 December 2015 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/46 of 28 July 1999, 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 and 2000/33 of 28 July 2000, and taking into consideration all other relevant resolutions,

Noting that the El Niño phenomenon has a recurring character and can lead to extensive natural hazards with the potential to seriously affect humankind,

Noting also that technological developments and international cooperation have enhanced the capabilities for the prediction of the El Niño phenomenon and thereby the potential for the preventive actions that may be taken to reduce its negative impacts,

Recalling the Sendai Declaration[1] and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,[2] adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

[1] Resolution 69/283, annex I.

[2] Ibid., annex II.

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Welcoming the Paris Agreement[3] and its early entry into force, encouraging all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[4] that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

Reaffirming its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,[5] which includes an update on El Niño/La Niña conditions and a section on addressing the socioeconomic and environmental impacts of the 2015/16 El Niño phenomenon,

Conscious of the importance of enhanced concerted efforts by the World Meteorological Organization with relevant national, regional and international monitoring centres to deliver, effectively and in a timely manner, more regionally focused climate services as well as training and capacity-building related to El Niño/La Niña, and noting the role of the International Research Centre on El Niño at Guayaquil, Ecuador, in this regard,

Mindful that, according to the El Niño/La Niña update of 28 July 2016 of the World Meteorological Organization, the strong 2015/16 El Niño ended in May 2016,

Recognizing that the peak of the 2015/16 El Niño was comparable in strength to the 1982/83 and 1997/98 events and, therefore, one of the strongest on record, and affected more than 60 million people during 2015 and 2016, in particular in developing countries, with significant short- and long-term impacts on the health of individuals, the economy and food production locally, regionally and globally, particularly affecting people whose livelihood depends on agriculture, fisheries and livestock activities,

Noting with concern that the El Niño phenomenon has posed a serious challenge to the hard-fought development gains of developing countries, particularly in terms of diverting resources from national development plans and programmes,

Noting with concern also that, as a consequence of the 2015/16 El Niño phenomenon, heavy rains, floods and, conversely, cold waves and heatwaves, wildfires, coral bleaching and drought episodes adversely affected countries and peoples, in particular in Latin America, Eastern and Southern Africa and South-East Asia and the Pacific, including by increasing the spread of diseases and the number of people displaced, affecting food security and infrastructure and hampering the ability of those countries and peoples to achieve sustainable development,

Noting with appreciation that some countries were able to partly reduce the adverse economic, social and environmental impacts of the 2015/16 El Niño

[3] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[5] A/71/230.

phenomenon by designing and implementing government-led early action plans that included the establishment of resilient multipurpose dams and other infrastructure projects, reinforcing existing social and productive infrastructure, revitalizing health services to combat vector-borne diseases, and strengthening social support services, safety nets, appropriate and preventive agriculture practices, income-generating public works and welfare programmes,

Acknowledging the importance of humanitarian assistance provided to countries that were most affected by the adverse effects of the 2015/16 El Niño phenomenon, while stressing the need to transcend this approach in favour of a multidisciplinary and articulated development-based response to strengthen national institutional capacities and effectively address these adverse consequences,

Noting the appointments of the Special Envoys on El Niño and Climate by the Secretary-General and their role in calling attention to the severe short- and long-term impacts of the 2015/16 El Niño, and looking forward to further work in this regard,

Stressing the importance of inclusiveness within the United Nations development system and that no one is left behind and no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution,

Noting the fifth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, to be held in Cancún, Mexico, from 22 to 26 May 2017,

1. *Urges* the effective implementation of the Sendai Declaration[1] and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030;[2]

2. *Reaffirms* the importance of developing strategies at the national, subregional, regional and international levels that aim to prevent, mitigate and repair the adverse economic, social and environmental impacts of the El Niño phenomenon, while recognizing ongoing national initiatives by affected countries to strengthen their capacities;

3. *Recognizes* the continued efforts by the Governments of Ecuador and Spain, the World Meteorological Organization and the inter-agency secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to support the International Research Centre on El Niño, and encourages them and other members of the international community to continue to make such contributions for the advancement of the Centre;

4. *Welcomes* the activities undertaken so far to strengthen the International Research Centre on El Niño, through collaboration with international monitoring centres, including national oceanographic institutions, and encourages further efforts to enhance regional and international recognition of and support for the Centre and to develop tools for decision makers and government authorities aimed at reducing the impact of the El Niño phenomenon;

5. *Notes* the assistance provided to Governments by the International Research Centre on El Niño and by other Governments and institutions in the development of early warning systems that allow for the implementation of anticipatory risk reduction measures that contribute to the reduction of the potential human, economic and environmental impacts of the phenomenon;

6. *Recognizes* the technical and scientific support of the World Meteorological Organization in producing regionally coordinated monthly and seasonal forecasts, in particular its establishment of a consensus mechanism for the development of updates on El Niño/La Niña conditions, which receives contributions from several climate centres, and also recognizes various initiatives undertaken by different countries to strengthen national and regional capacities;

7. *Encourages* the World Meteorological Organization, in this regard, to continue to strengthen collaboration and the exchange of data and information with relevant institutions;

8. *Calls upon* the international community to urgently provide financial, technical and capacity-building support to countries that were affected by the 2015/16 El Niño phenomenon;

9. *Encourages* responses to the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon not only to address the immediate needs but also to support longer-term sustainable development and build the resilience of livelihoods, especially in the agricultural sectors and rural areas;

10. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates and resources, to ensure that no one is left behind and no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution;

11. *Encourages* the United Nations inter-agency task team on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals to consider discussing, at the second and third annual multi-stakeholder forums on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, recommendations on how to better identify requirements and options for the adequate provision of science, technology and innovation elements to enable countries to address the impacts of the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon, as appropriate;

12. *Encourages* the second and third Global Infrastructure Forums to identify and address, as appropriate, infrastructure and capacity gaps and needs to enhance preparedness and promote early actions in countries affected by the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon;

13. *Requests* the United Nations system, through existing coordination mechanisms and platforms, to take into consideration, where appropriate, the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon when designing risk reduction and development strategies, in particular in the context of the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience: Towards a Risk-Informed and Integrated Approach to Sustainable Development;

14. *Encourages* interested Member States, with the support of the United Nations development system, to develop integrated, coherent and comprehensive government-led strategies to mitigate the adverse impacts of the El Niño/La Niña phenomenon and to collaborate in support of affected countries;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include in his report to the General Assembly at its seventy-second and seventy-third sessions, under the sub-item entitled "Disaster risk reduction" of the item entitled "Sustainable development", a section on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to consider at its seventy-third session the topic "Effective global response to address the impacts of the El Niño phenomenon" under the sub-item entitled "Disaster risk reduction", unless otherwise agreed.

66th plenary meeting
21 December 2016